



MATTER 3

RESPONSES OF LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL ("LTC")

(LTC will not be appearing on Day 3 when this matter is scheduled to be discussed but is putting forward this short position paper for the Inspector's assistance.)

Generally

1. Although LTC has grave concerns about the housing allocation within the District, particularly insofar as it affects Loughton, nevertheless it strongly supports the overall housing requirement of 11,400 new homes for the plan period 2011 – 2033.
2. Paragraph 2.43 of the Plan identified the full objectively assessed need for housing for Epping Forest District of some 12,573 new homes, but then explained that the "starting point" figure had to be reduced *"to take into account environmental policy and infrastructure constraints."*¹ LTC endorses that approach.
3. It is submitted that, in accordance with paragraph 159 of the NPPF (ed. 27.03.12), EFDC has *"a clear understanding of housing needs"* in its area and has prepared an appropriate SHMA to assess its full housing needs, properly working with neighbouring authorities. However, paragraph 47 of the NPPF additionally provides that, in proceeding with their local plans, local planning authorities are required to ensure that the *"full objectively assessed needs"* for housing are to be met, *"as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework"*. It is clear therefore that the Plan can properly fall short of meeting the "full objectively assessed needs" for housing in its area because of the conflict which would otherwise arise with other policies.²
4. Other material policies of the NPPF to which EFDC is entitled, and bound, to have regard are the protection of the Green Belt³, the protection of the natural

¹ See also paragraph 2.3 of the SSR (2018).

² See Keane LJ in **Hunston Properties Ltd v SCLG** [2013 EWCA Civ 1610 at [6].

³ Paragraphs 79 – 92.

environment (including sites of European importance such as SACs)⁴, the provision and use of green space⁵, minimising the effect of pollution on the local and natural environment⁶ and promoting sustainable transport⁷. Giving appropriate weight to those policies inevitably means that the OAN for housing within the plan period must be reduced to the extent proposed by EFDC.

5. Were the higher OAN to be allocated throughout the District in the same proportions as the current housing requirement in the Plan has been allocated, then as far as Loughton is concerned the following would be adversely affected to a significant degree:

- Open space provision.
- The protection of the Forest SAC.
- The highway network, in particular
 - the Rectory Lane/Pyrles Lane junction and numerous feeder junctions along the A1168 Rectory Lane and Chigwell Road;
 - the A121-A104-B1393-B172 Wake Arms roundabout;
 - the Langston Road/Oakwood Hill junction (which in any event would need to cope with additional traffic from the employment sites LOU.E1 and LOU.E2 and noting that the impact upon that junction of the Epping Forest Shopping Park was not known when the submission version of the Local Plan was drafted.)
- Capacity on the Central Line.
- Increased vehicular emissions and air quality.

6. If, contrary to the submission of LTC, the Inspector is minded to find that the housing requirement for the plan period ought to have been the whole OAN, then LTC submits that the excess housing requirement should be directed wholly at the Garden Community sites and should not fall in any respect upon Loughton.

⁴ Paragraphs 109 – 125.

⁵ Paragraphs 70 and 73 - 74.

⁶ Paragraph 110.

⁷ Paragraphs 29 – 41.

7. In conclusion, LTC submits that it would have been clearly impractical and unreasonable for EFDC to have taken the higher housing figure of the OAN and that it was appropriate for EFDC to have reduced it for the reasons and to the extent set out in the Plan.

20.01.19

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